

# **NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

6th September 2018

Education Skills and Culture Scrutiny Committee

## **Report of the Head of Participation Chris Millis**

**Matter for Information:** Cerdd NPT Music

**Wards Affected:** All wards

### **Purpose of the Report**

To present members with information on the Cerdd NPT Music Service

### **Executive Summary**

The attached report gives a full account of the current position of the Cerdd NPT Music Service

### **Background**

The Cerdd NPT Music Service was established in September 2016 as a stand-alone Music Service for Neath Port Talbot following the disengagement from Swansea and the discontinuation of the West Glamorgan Music Service. The service continues to work very closely with all regions within the ERW Music Hub.

Staffing levels at present are one Manager, two Senior Team Leaders, twenty-four contracted teachers (18 FTE) and three self-employed teachers. All contracted staff undertake performance management, administered by the Senior Team Leaders.

Core funding was originally £272,000 but since the split from Swansea and in our first full financial year, the service ran efficiently with a £170,000 subsidy, achieved by restructuring the work force, re-setting timetables and cutting travel time and costs. This year's core funding is £160,000.

Our highly skilled team of peripatetic teachers deliver weekly high quality instrumental, vocal and full class music curriculum lessons to nearly all primary schools (with the exception of Alderman Davies and Maesmarchog), both all through schools, all secondary schools and one special school in Neath Port Talbot at a very competitive rate compared to other music services in Wales. Information from our most recent data tells us we deliver to just under 5,000 NPT children a week and 2,000 of these receive vocal or instrumental lessons. We are in constant contact with schools in order to deliver bespoke music packages which suit the individual needs of the schools.

“Buy back” is at the discretion of headteachers and dependent on how much they value music within their school. The feedback from schools and heads of music continues to be extremely positive. In presentations to both LLAN and NAASH we were promised full support from both bodies, who stated they are very satisfied with the new service and the team of peripatetic staff are held in very high regard.

Cerdd NPT Music staff run three after school Music Centres where NPT students are invited to join one of our five ensembles and are offered many opportunities to perform in public as well as taking part in masterclasses and residential courses. The focus at music centres is on improving standards, pupil attendance and inclusion. We have started a new Woodwind section at one of the Music Centres and we are now providing a free bus to Dwr Y Felin and Cwmtawe Music Centres to encourage children from Port Talbot, Margam and Cymer Afan to attend the centres to enhance their musical experiences.

We have recently established a Senior String Orchestra and hope to build on this to eventually form a County Youth Orchestra in NPT.

The Cwmtawe Youth Band, which is the competing band within our Senior Youth Brass Band, has recently qualified to represent Wales in the 4th Section at the upcoming National Brass Band Championship Finals held in Cheltenham.

We had strong representation on the ERW (Six Counties) Brass Band course and expect good representation on the ERW Orchestral course next year. Six NPT pupils

have been offered places on the Welsh National Youth Brass Band course this summer.

Our Cerdd NPT Music Summer Concert at Margam Orangery in July showcased over 200 NPT pupils in five ensembles and was a great success. Our next Cerdd NPT Music concert will be a Remembrance Sunday Concert held on 11th November 2018 at Saint David's Church commemorating the centenary of the end of WW1.

As part of our new 'Young People's Well Being Project' we held three Choir Workshop days for year 7 to year 13 pupils attending NPT Schools or College. We hope to have further workshop days and form a County Youth Choir by seeking grant funding for this project. We held four free Music Days for all year 4, 5 and 6 pupils at The Princess Royal Theatre and Pontardawe Arts Centre in September 2017. The children were entertained by a Staff Orchestra and Soul Band and had a chance to learn about the different instruments at a 'try them out' instrument session. This was a very successful project and there was an increase in take up of music provision in some schools as a result. We are extending the project this year to include year 7 and 8 pupils. We will now perform shows at each NPT Secondary School and they will invite year 5 and 6 pupils from their feeder primary schools to attend. This will take place from September 18th to the 28th. We are also developing a 'P-buzz' workshop to deliver a one-off full class lesson on plastic wind instruments to involve as many NPT pupils as possible.

We have established a County Instrumental Examination structure for brass, woodwind, strings and harp which starts at Initial Level (pre Grade 1), Grade 1 and Grade 2 Level. This allows NPT instrumental pupils to experience the music examination process from preparation to the exam itself at no cost to parents.

In addition to County exams staff also prepare students for Trinity College, London, ABRSM, GCSE, AS and A Level practical music examinations and following the external examinations, the Grade 3 to 5 examination pieces can be used for the practical section of Music GCSE, Grade 5 to 7 for AS and A level. The higher grades of all the instrumental exams offer UCAS points to pupils and are a useful addition to University applications.

Cerdd NPT Music were granted Examination Centre status at Baglan Education and Training Centre in 2017 by Trinity College, London. We have hosted successful sessions of brass and woodwind exams at BETC and our first string exams took place there in January 2018 with a 100% pass rate across each instrumental discipline. Our most recent success has been to be certified as a Rock and Pop Examination Centre and the first of these exams were held on the 21st July 2018 with a 100% pass rate.

The WAG Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee launched a Report on their 'Inquiry into funding for and access to Music Education' in June 2018. The report contained sixteen recommendations. There is a strong feeling that this could result in Music Services throughout Wales being centrally funded by Welsh Government as the report suggests there is a 'Music Culture Crisis' due to cuts to Music Service funding over many years.

## **Financial Impact**

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

N/A

## **Workforce Impacts**

N/A

## **Legal Impacts**

There are no legal impacts associated with this report.

## **Risk Management**

There are no risk management issues associated with this report.

## **Consultation**

There is no requirement for consultation

## **Recommendations**

That members note this report for information

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

N/A

## **Implementation of Decision**

N/A

## **Appendices**

National Assembly for Wales Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee

Hitting the Right Note, Inquiry into funding for and access to music education

<http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11595/cr-ld11595-e.pdf>

## **Officer Contact**

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